# A Just Reprehension

TO

# JOHN NORRIS

Of *Newton St Loe*,

FOR HIS

## Unjust REFLECTION

on the *QUAKERS*,

In his Book, Entituled, *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life*, &c.

Together with his False Representation of their Principle of the Light, in his Postscript, wherein he Opposes it to his Notion of the *divine Ayr or Ideal world*, as he terms it.

His Confusion and Self-contradiction therein manifested; and the Doctrine and Principle of the *Quakers* thereby cleared from his Abuse; occasionally written by way of Letter, with Advice to him, and may serve for a better Information of the *Quakers* Principle, to whom the knowledge of his and this shall come.

By *Richard Vickris*.

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# A Juſt Reprehenſion to *John Norris* of *Newton St Loe*, for his Unjuſt Reflection on the *Quakers*, in his Book, Entituled, *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life*, &c.

*John Norris*,

I Need no Apology for this brief Reprehenſion, if thou think'ſt I do Review the firſt page of thy Epiſtle Dedicatory, (viz.) *He that ſhall point out any of the Irregularites or Miſtakes of the Conduct of Human Life, ought to be lookt upon as a univerſal Friend, and promoter of the publick Happineſs; and the more ſevere he is in his Cenſure (provided it be true and well grounded) the more charitable he is in his undertaking, and the more like to be ſerviceable in his performance.*

When firſt I peruſed thy Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life, with reference to the ſtuddy of Learning and Knowledge, I was and ſtill am pleaſed with all that tends to the propagation of Original and neceſſary Truth, but rejoyce where I find it ſpring from an upright mind, pure intention, and clean Veſſel; for whoſo undertakes to reprehend the intelligible Conduct of Human Life, ought firſt to purge himſelf from the Irregularities of his moral Conduct, which doth cloud and darken his underſtanding.

Howbeit, I was ſo far from a Spirit of Detraction or Emulation, that conſidering from whence it came, I in ſome ſort rejoyced in it ſo far as it was ſound and true, hoping and deſiring that what was either clearly and rightly detected, or equally and fairly recommended, might gain upon the Underſtanding of ſuch whoſe

Education and Literature had either prejudiced, or at beſt miſtated and unfitted them for receiving the ſame Truth, and divine Principle by meaner Inſtruments, reſpecting worldly eſteem; which Principle hath been and is by many ſuch faithful Witneſſes plentifully born teſtimony to, as well by doing as ſuffering, by the ſuppoſed learned Rabbies of our day, as alſo by Doctrine, in Word and Writing, though not altogether under ſome of thy Terms, or pretended Phyloſophical Notions; yet according to the Demonſtration of the Spirit, and in words approved and choſen of God to make known himſelf by, and taught us in the holy Scriptures, God having in his divine Wiſdom in this Age, as in former Ages, 1 *Cor.* 1. 27, 28, 29. *Choſen the fooliſh things of the world to Confound the Wiſe; and the Weak things of the world to Confound the things that are mighty, and baſe things of the world, and things that are deſpiſed hath God choſen; yea, things which are not, to bring to naught things which are, that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.* Agreeable to this is that divine acknowledgement of Chriſt Jeſus to his Father, *Matth.* 1. 11, and 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from th: Wiſe and Prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes.* Matth. 18. 10. *Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of theſe little Ones*: I fear thou art guilty in this perticular, *viz.* of deſpiſing the Teſtimony of God in this Age through the meanneſs of the Inſtruments; Conſider what is ſaid, *Theſ.* 10. 4. 8. *He therefore that deſpiſeth, deſpiſeth not man, but God, who hath alſo given unto us his holy Spirit.* From the too apparent Reflection thou makes in the 77th page of thy Book *New Edition*, one might at firſt think, that thou wert a great ſtranger to the Converſation of the People, called *Quakers*, and more eſpecially to their Writings, which had unwarily ſubjected thee to a raſh and immature Cenſure, in rendring them dark, aukward, untoward, and unprincipled in the way of repreſenting their Principle, *viz.* the Light within, thereby diſcrediting, as thou ſayeſt, one of the nobleſt *Theories* in the World; but the thing in it ſelf, rightly underſtood, is true. I being under ſome diſſatisfaction about theſe Expreſſions of thine, took occaſion to viſit *Joſeph Langton* of *Newton* St *Loe*, a perſon of my reſpect and acquaintance, and near Neighbour of thine, with whom I had ſome diſcourſe about thy aforeſaid Book, and in perticular the

above

above recited passage, recommending to him *Robert Barclay's* Apology for the true Christian Divinity for thy perusal, and having understood by him, thou hadst been Conversant with it, I confess it extreamly dampt me, and gave occasion for other thoughts than a supposed Ignorance of the Persons, and manner of their representing their Principles, whom thou hadst thus evilly treated, and exposed without reason or provocation as I know of; and now I shall proceed to show thee wherein, though I presume thou already knowest: *Robert Barclay* in his fifth and sixth Propositions treating of this universal and saving Light of Jesus Christ, page 110. calls it *Supernatural Light and Grace*, quotes *John* 1. 9. *That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the World.* Which place, as he observes, doth so clearly favour the *Quakers* Doctrine, that it is called their Text; hence he draws this necessary Conclusion, That the Life that is in him, *viz.* the Word Christ, is the Light of Men, *John* 1. 4. In other places he calls it according to Divine Instruction, The Seed sown in several sorts of Ground, The Word of the Kingdom, The Word of Faith, The Implanted or Ingrafted Word which is able to save the Soul; quoting *Cyrillus Alexandrinus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Augustine*, *Buchanan*, &c. in confirmation of this Doctrine, as thou mayst see at large, whereby it appears, whatever thou art, he was so far from the Ambition of being thought the first promulgator of that heavenly Doctrine of the Universallity and Sufficiency of this Light within for Salvation, that he rejoyces to meet with it, imbracing it where-ever he finds it, improves the interest of it, and instead of calumniating its Votaries, represents it to the world, Cleared from the Rust of darker Ages, and advantaged with the Confessions and Testimonies of purer Primitive Times.

And now I Enquire, what are the Dark, aukward and untoward Expressions, and unprincipled way of representing this Principle that thou alledgest the *Quakers* are guilty of? are any of these here quoted out of the afore-mentioned Author part thereof? or in what other Book or Writing of the *Quakers* may they be found?

I shall now farther say, that this *Divine Word*, Light, Grace and Truth, or whatever else it hath been called by its Followers

through

through divine inſtruction in any age, is a wiſe and underſtanding Spirit, Holy, *&c.* according as 'tis written in the Book of *Wiſdom*, Chap. 7. *In all Ages entring into holy Souls, maketh them Friends of God and Prophets.* And in Chap. 4. verſ. 4. Its ſaid, *Into a malicious Soul Wiſdom will not enter, nor dwell in the Body that is ſubject unto Sin; for the holy Spirit of Diſcipline will flie Deceit, and remove from Thoughts that are without underſtanding, and will not abide when Unrighteouſneſs cometh in; for Wiſdom is a loving Spirit, and will not acquit a Blaſphemer of his Words, for God is witneſs of his Reins, and a true beholder of his Heart, and a hearer of his Tongue.* Verſ. 8. *Therefore he that ſpeaketh unrighteous things can't be hid, neither ſhall Vengeance when it puniſheth paſs by him.* Now ſeeing theſe Sayings are true and righteous, and that it is poſſible to profeſs this Doctrine of the Divine Word, Light, Grace, Spirit of Wiſdom and Truth, and the Teachings of it, and yet not poſſeſs it nor be learned of it, nor led by it, but whilſt preaching of it to others, but a Caſt away: I adviſe thee to conſider in what ground and nature thou yet ſtand'ſt and liv'ſt in, and what Spirit lives and rules in thee: hath not Unrighteouſneſs entred in through Self-love and Eſteem, which blinds the Eye, and cauſeth the Tongue to ſpeak unrighteous things? Is not Self exalted to ſit in the Temple of God, as God in thee? And art thou not decking thy ſelf with thy corrupt wiſdom, which is the forbidden Fruit, and will prove folly in the end? Be not high-minded, but fear, ſo ſhalt thou learn the Ways of the Lord, and walk therein ſafely, and have unity and fellowſhip with the Saints in Light, not in the talk and profeſſion of it only, though never ſo high; for with the Heart man muſt believe, before with his Mouth Confeſſion is made unto Salvation.

Who knows this Work, can glorifie God, and bear Teſtimony of his Son Chriſt Jeſus; and the work he hath done in his earthen veſſel, which none elſe could do, *viz.* of Sanctification & Redemption through the Truth, whoſe Word is Truth, whereof he hath made many living Witneſſes to the Praiſe of his Name, whoſe own Works praiſe him, and to the joy of the upright for evermore. And this is better and beyond all the high Notions, and Self-conceited Imaginations from the wiſdom that is below, and who is brought to this eſtate, and abide therein, walking in Wiſdom's Path, dare not ſpeak unrighteous things, knowing he cannot be hid, nor be

a Blaſphemer of his words; for God is witneſs of his Reins, and a true beholder of his Heart; know therefore, its not a light thing to ſpeak Evil of things one underſtands not; read 2 *Pet.* 2. verſ. 12. and *Jude* 10. much leſs wilfully to blaſt the Fame of God's Name and Work in the Earth, in and by his People, becauſe they agree not with man's ways and conceited wiſe Notions, which God's wiſdom from above ever did, and will confound; and how greatly thou art found guilty in this perticular, by the following Reflections on thy Poſtſcript may appear: And ſo I conclude this part, having diſcharged my ſelf to thee on the afore-mentioned occaſion.

Since my firſt peruſal of thy Book, I have lately met with thy Poſtſcript, whereby I perceive thou art jealous of being eſteemed a Proſelite to the *Quakers* Doctrine; I am ready to believe thy above recited Ignominious Reflection, was calculated to obviate ſuch an Imputation, which perhaps thou thought would be as little honour to thee, as they may juſtly conclude thy Pretentions to their Principle would be a Credit to it; for they deſire no ſuch Proſelites who affects not their Principle for its own ſake, but for ſome worldly Honour and Eſteem they hope to get by it; Therefore though theirs, if rightly underſtood, be true, as thou confeſſeſt thy ſelf, page 77. and that it is ſuch *Quakeriſm* as makes a good part of St *John's* Goſpel, and St *Auſtin's* Works; and according to thy Poſtſcript, if the *Quakers* underſtood their own Notion, it would not very much differ from thine, which I take to imply a ſort of Confeſſion to their Principle; for Truth and Error are oppoſite, the Defect it ſeems muſt lie ſomewhere, and that according to thy Judgment muſt be the *Quakers* Ignorance, how to explain their Notion of the Light, and into what Principles to reſolve it; but ſeeing this would imply a Difference only in *Terminis*, and ſo not reach thy Caſe, like one that forgets what he had ſaid laſt, thou proceeds to magnifie the difference to ſet thee far enough from being reputed a *Proſelite*, which to avoid there needed a greater Diſcrimination; This I take to be the Deſign of thy Poſtſcript, where thou undertakes to explain the *Quakers* Principle, by thy Suppoſitions & falſe Diſtinctions the better to ſet off & expoſe thine, by rendring it the more novel to this age, and ſo to avoid ſymbolizing with the *Quakers* in thy notion of the Divine Light; how unfairly and unſincerely, as alſo confuſedly, with reſpect both to their and thy own Principle

thou

thou haſt dealt herein, is my preſent deſign to manifeſt; whoſo undertakes to Confute the Principles of any People, ought to take them up and ſtate them rightly, and honeſtly, according as they are believed and owned by themſelves, quoting their own Words and Authors, and not barely as he conceives and imagines them to be, as ſuiting his deſign: Otherwiſe he is unjuſt, and quarrels with his own Shadow, and is like a man that beats the Air, which in thy Poſtſcript thou art found doing; for firſt thou ſayſt, *The* Quakers *uſually talk of this Light within, as of ſome Divine Communication and manifeſtation* (*only*:) How does this appear to be true, thou quotes no Author for it, I apprehend thou intendeſt hereby, or elſe thy aſſertion has little weight or matter in it, *viz.* that the *Quakers* own the Light within to be an accident, and not a ſubſtantial inherent Principle of Divine Excellency, which is a great miſtake, and it is to be feared a wilful one too, ſeeing 'tis generally known, and thou confeſſeſt it too, that they quote the Teſtimony of *John* the Evangeliſt for their Principle, as thou haſt done for thine, they believing according thereunto, Chap. 1. verſ. 4. *In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men*: And if the Life of the Word be the Light of men, then ſurely the *Quakers* cannot be ſuppoſed to believe it any thing leſs than a Real Spiritual Subſtance, which the Soul of man is capable to feel and apprehend; *For all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*, John 1. 3. Thus thy firſt diſtinction fails to the ground: Thy ſecond is as inſignificant, and like an Arrow ſhot at Random, lights on thy own head, being attended with ſome Contradiction to thy former, *viz.* Thou ſayeſt, *The* Quakers *repreſent this Light within as a ſort of extraordinary Inſpiration*: Where learnt thou this? Before it was a Divine Communication and Manifeſtation only; and now an Extraordinary Inſpiration. Thou wouldſt have done well to have let the *Quakers* Principle alone till thou hadſt learnt it better, and more honeſtly to repreſent it: Is not Extraordinary more than Common, or Communication and manifeſtation (only?) Have not the *Quakers* declared the Light to be Univerſal, as well as Divine, in its gift and manifeſtation to the Sons of men? It is certainly true they have, and yet I deny not but ſuch who apply their minds in Obedience to the teachings of this Light and heavenly Gift, may be made partakers of more, *viz.* extraordinary Gifts and

and Graces by the Inſpiration of the ſame Spirit, &c. If for this they have the Name of *Enthuſiaſts* given them, as in thy Section of thy Poſtſcript; Though it be in Deriſion, they will rejoyce in it, for it ſhall be as an Orrament of Grace to their Head, and Chains about their Neck. Again, in the ſame Section thou ſayſt, I ſuppoſe it, viz. *The Light within to be a man's natural and ordinary way of underſtanding.* And juſt before thou made it to be the very Eſſence and Subſtance of the Deity, which are thy own expreſs words; ſee thy Confuſion and Self-contradiction; by theſe Words, (*viz.*) a man's natural and ordinary way of underſtanding, I take thee to intend the ſame thing as in *page* 77. where thou call'ſt it Reaſon and Conſcience; and yet at the ſame time call'ſt it, *The divine λογος, and Region of Truth, in which are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, the great and univerſal Oracle lodged in every man's Breaſt, whereof the ancient Urim and Thummim was an expreſs Type or Emblem.* Here thou Debaſeſt and Confoundeſt thy Principle, making it to be a part of man's Nature, whereas the Principle or divine Light, as held by the *Quakers*, is a diſtinct thing from man's Soul, Reaſon, or natural Conſcience, *viz.* a more excellent Spirit and Principle. And herein I confeſs is a *material Difference* betwixt thy principle of Light, and the *Quakers*, as thou haſt expreſt it; ſure I am it is a great Error to render the Divine λογος, by which all things were made, and are upheld, to be no higher a Principle than man's Reaſon and Conſcience, or natural and ordinary way of underſtanding, which reaſon is a property Eſſential to him as Man. I confeſs, to know the things of a man, according to that Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9, 10, 11. *But as it is written, Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit ſearcheth all things, yea, the Deep things of God: for what man knows the things of a man ſave the Spirit of a man that is in him, even ſo the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God.* Again, *Mat.* 11. 27. *Neither knoweth any man the Father, ſave the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* By which it manifeſtly appears, that the true knowledge of God and Spiritual things are attained by the Spirit, which is ſuperior to man's rational Principle or natural Conſcience, which may be defiled, and corrupted, as 'tis ſaid expreſly of the Impure, that even their Mind and Conſcience is defiled, *Tit.* 1. 15.

In thy *third Section*, thou com'ſt in with (a *Salvo Errore*) *If I miſtake not*) *the* Quakers *confine their Light within to ſome certain Objects, namely Morral and Spiritual Truths, in order only to the direction of Practice.* How ſhouldſt thou do otherwiſe but miſtake the Principles of others, ſeeing thou art ſo confuſed about thine own? however, I muſt tell thee its no ſmall Fault at ſuch an uncertainty to Expoſe peoples Principles, and 'tis an abuſe to ſay the *Quakers* confine the Light within: It is Divine, Supernatural and Uncircumſcribeable, in it are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge; where have the *Quakers* taught otherwiſe? Have they not teſtified and declared the Light and the Spirit of Truth are one and the ſame in *Being*, which will guide into all Truth, *John* 16. 13. The *Quakers* believe this divine Light to be the quickner of their underſtandings to know, and of their wills to love, and practical Truth, and that it aſſiſts the natural Faculties of the Soul in the attainments of neceſſary Arts and Sciences, as well as capacitate it to know and practiſe Morral and Spiritual Truths. Thou mayſt read what the Author to the Book of *Wiſdom* ſays on this ſubject, in the 9th and 10th Chapters.

And whereas thou ſayſt, *The* Quakers *make the Light within a Supplement to Scripture, which they ſay is not ſufficient without it, nor indeed any more than a meer dead Letter.*

I Anſwer; Theſe words *Supplement to Scripture* are thy own, not ours, and this ſeems to be a Compoſition of thy own notion of the *Quakers* Faith concerning the holy Scriptures, without any quotation of their Words or Writings, and as 'tis an objection is built upon thy miſtake. In thy former *Section*, viz. *The* Quakers *repreſent this Light within as a ſort of extraordinary Inſpiration*; Which hath been already anſwered, proving the Univerſallity of the Divine Light in man, which conſidered, there's no juſt cauſe for this as an Objection againſt the *Quakers* aſſigning the Scriptures to be inſufficient without the Light, becauſe the knowledge of the holy Scriptures cannot occur to the underſtanding without it, and the formal reaſon thereof is its preſence and manifeſtation. The *Quakers* believe that Chriſt Jeſus by his divine Light within, doth in theſe days, as in the Days of his Fleſh, expound, fulfil and open to the true Believers the holy Scriptures, which according to the Apoſtle's exhortation to *Timothy*, Chap. 3. 3, 15. *Are able to make wiſe unto Salvation*

(note)

(note) THROUGH FAITH *which is in Christ Jesus.* The word *Supplement* in this sense, I hope, will be found no Error, but according to thy Construction of the *Quakers* representing the Light within as a *sort of extraordinary Inspiration*, Sect 2. *Or special priviledge of a certain order of men their own party*, as in Sect. 4. And then making them to say the *Scriptures with relation only to the Direction of Practise*, as thy Lines import, Sect. 3. are not sufficient without it, *nor indeed any more than a meer dead Letter*, is to render the *Quakers* not only singular and Erronious in their Principle of the Light, (which shall be more duly observed in its place) but also Contemptuous of the holy Scriptures, as useless and insufficient to all but themselves, which is a great and hainous abuse of a Society of People, without cause and provocation, and contrary to their publick and known Assertions, both by Word and Writing, who believe according to the same Apostle to *Timothy*, Chap. 2. 3. 16, 17. *That all Scripture given by Inspiration of God, is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the man of God may be Perfect, throughly furnished unto all good Works.* And this shall suffice for an Answer to thy *third Section.*

The *fourth* is a down-right falsity (viz.) *The* Quakers *make their Light within a special Priviledge of a certain Order of men their own party, not indeed as to the possibility, yet they do as to the act making none but those of their own way to be actually inlightned by it.*

This is so abundantly Confuted by the Writings in general of those People, more perticularly in the afore-recited Book of *Robert Barclay*'s, which considering thou hast read, I am the more amazed at thy Assertion: They say all are actually inlightned by it, all are Called, but all have not obeyed, according to these Scriptures, *Micah* 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is Good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do Justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk Humbly with thy God*, 1 John 9. 3. 19. 1 Cor. 13. 7. Tit. 2. 11. *&c.* Thy distinction of a possibility, and not actually with respect to the Divine Illumination of this Principle, is trivial, though not with respect to Salvation by it: The Capacity or Possibility is not, nor can be in man abstract from the actual Illuminating Power and Spirit, no more than seeing if the light be seperate from the Eye; The *Quakers* have, and still do declare, that Christ Jesus, the Light of the World, is the universal free Gift of God, for

the benefit of all men, in order to their Salvation; and is not this Common yet Special priviledge, becauſe dearly purchaſed and freely beſtowed on loſt man, that thou mayſt not want occaſion to traduce the *Quakers*, thou haſt ſo much over-done it in this *Section*, as to contradict thy ſelf in the *fifth*; as for inſtance, *Sect.* 4. to be actaully inlightned according to thy Principle, is no ſpecial priviledge, but the common and univerſal benefit of all men, yea, of all the intelligent Creation, who all ſee and underſtand in this Light of God, without which there would be neither Truth nor Underſtanding: On the contrary, Poſtſcript *Sect.* 5. thou ſayſt, Thy Light does not formally enlighten or inſtruct thee, but when thou carefully attends to and conſults it, and read what is written in thoſe Divine Ideal Characters: The like Doctrine thou haſt, *pag.* 71. of thy Book, *Sect.* 5. and 6. where treating of thy *double illumination of thy divine λογος*, viz. *Fundamentally and Potentially, or elſe effectually or actually, in the former ſenſe* (thou ſayeſt) *he inlightens every man in the latter, only thoſe who duly conſult him, and attend to him.* See what Contradiction thy ſtrained Notions run thee into one while to be actually enlightned, is the Common and Univerſal benefit of all men; another while only of thoſe who Conſult it, and attend to it, and all to avoid being thought to Symbolize with the *Quakers* in thy notion of the Divine Light; thy Diſtinction of Potentially and Actually can have no more in it than the Difference in the ſubject, the one univerſal act of the Word or Light, enlightning every man, comprehends both; theſe are but new invented terms to expreſs the moſt ancient, and more Divinely, and better revealed Truths of the Goſpel: Thy *fifth* I take in the firſt part of it to be the ſame in ſubſtance with thy firſt, Differing in form of expreſſions, viz. *The Quakers by their Light within underſtand ſome Determinate formed dictate or propoſition expreſly or poſſitively directing or inſtructing them to do ſo or ſo*; as in thy firſt thou call'ſt it, *ſome divine Communication or Manifeſtation ONLY.* Where didſt thou learn this definition of the *Quakers* Faith and Doctrine of the Light within? The *Quakers* believe the Light of Chriſt within to be God's divine Oracle of Wiſdom in the Soul, the former Dictater, and determiner of heavenly Propoſitions, their Directing and Inſtructing what to chooſe, and what to refuſe, as the original Cauſe of the knowledge and love of Truth, which are its proper effects. Now wherein is

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the *Quakers* Light, as thou term'ſt it, Inferiour to that which thou call'ſt thine, except in the Differing Character thou giveſt it? they own the Real and Subſtantial Truth of God, the Life of the Word, the Light of men, as Chriſt ſaid of himſelf, *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life*: That this divine Light which is the Light of men, is always in ſome degree and meaſure preſent in the Soul, by which it is upheld either in God's love or anger, the *Quakers* believe; and that in him we live, move and have our being, though with reſpect to operation after a different manner and meaſure, and paſſing the underſtanding of man. And whereas thou ſayeſt, **Thy Light** *is only the eſſential Truth of God*: This is a high preſumption, about which I have already ſhewed thy Confuſion in other places, calling it Reaſon and Conſcience, and a man's natural and ordinary way of underſtanding; conſider *Mat.* 6. 22. 23. *The Light of the Body is the Eye; if therefore thy Eye be ſingle, thy whole Body ſhall be full of Light: but if thine Eye be evil, thy whole Body ſhall be full of Darkneſs; if therefore the Light that is in thee be Darkneſs, how great is that Darkneſs?* So may I ſay, if that Doctrine & Principle thou recommendeſt to the World for Truth & Excellency, be erronious and faulty, how great is that Error and Fault? Again, thou ſayeſt, *Thy Light is always preſent to thy underſtanding, and Intimately united with it ſtill*, Sect. 5. Which in thy ſenſe of the Light, is to ſay, thy Soul is never without thy Reaſon and Conſcience; I wiſh they were both reformed, that thou mayſt be no more guilty of theſe and ſuch like falſe Aſperſions; That the Light, as ſuppoſing it to be what really it is, *viz.* a Diſtinct Principle from the Soul is always preſent to the underſtanding, which impl es its operation upon the natural Capacity, or Organ, the ordinary means of knowing, I conceive is more then can be ſafely or experimentally ſaid, becauſe the Organ may be hurt, and the underſtanding in that ſenſe interrupted, and conſequently no fit Medium or Receptacle either for the Soul or its Light: beſides, the Soul may be abſent from the natural underſtanding, by the interpoſition of Spiritual, as well as Natural cauſes, and yet preſent with the Light in its ſpiritual way of underſtanding: But to ſay as thou doſt, that *Thy Light is only the Eſſential Truth of God, and that it is always preſent to thy underſtanding, and intimately united with it, and yet that it does not formally inlighten or inſtruct it, but when carefully attended to and conſulted*; ſeems to diſcover a Contradiction in it ſelf,

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and to the formal Reason of its Being, and Presence, and Sufficiency in the one act of the same Principle, as well as to the state and nature of Intimate Union; for how can any thing be intimately united to its Principle, and not partake of its Nature and Influences, which is the reason and manner of its union? And how can this be, and not carefully attended to and consulted? is not this manifest Confusion? That the presence of the Light does enlighten and instruct all in some sense and degree, is sufficiently proved by Scripture; By thy word *formally enlighten*, I apprehend thou intendest the operative Exercise, as in page 17. and as here applied to, Light signifies no more than actually to enlighten, *ex parte objecti*; I grant such as do not carefully attend to and consult this Divine Light, does not witness the increases of it unto the Redemption and Salvation of their Souls.

It is the Path of the Just that is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day; if the Light, as thou asserts, doth not formally enlighten or instruct, but when carefully attended to and consulted, how then should it quicken and raise the Soul from Death to Life, according to the multiplied Experience of holy *David?* And how doth God speak once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not? *Job* 33. 14, 15, 16, 17. *In a Dream, in a Vision of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth upon men, in slumbring upon the Bed, then he openeth the Ears of Men, and sealeth their Instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide Pride from man.* Again, in *Isa.* 65. *I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, to a Nation that was not called by my Name.* How frequently doth the Lord complain by his Prophets of his Calling to his people to return and Repent, but they would not answer. *Note*, the Call of God is not without Instruction; read *Micah* 6. 8. and *Prov.* 1. from 20. to the end. And see what Wisdom does also in *Nehemiah*, how they rebelled against God, notwithstanding he gave his good Spirit to Instruct them. The Testimony of *John* the Evangelist, the 5th and 21st. *Eph.* 2. 1. 4, 5. *You hath he quickned, who were Dead in Trespasses and Sins; but God who is rich in Mercy for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, hath quickned us together in Christ, by Grace ye are saved.* 2 Cor. 4. 6, 7. *God who commanded Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give us the Light of the*

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*knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; but we have this Treasure in earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us.* These and many other Texts abundantly prove that God quickens and enlightens man, before man can turn unto him: Thy sixth and last *Section*, I take to be an extravagant noise and bluster against the *Quakers*, to supply the want of real matter of Objection; what means else so great and general Reflections, without offering any Proof, or reducing it to a perticular Charge, to say the *Quakers* do not offer any rational or intelligible account of their *Light within* proves nothing; to tell the world, as thou dost, they Cant in some loose & general Expressions about the Light, does little else but impose upon trust, which is to beg Credit, whilst thou mentions not what those loose and general Expressions are; but to say they Confirm them by the authority of St *John*'s Gospel, is in some sort to contradict thy assertion, for so to confirm them, argues they agree to what is there taught, and if so, as is most certainly true, and that the *Quakers* do adhere to those divine Words and Expressions; it looks like too much prophaneness, to account them loose and Canting; and to say, that the *Quakers* understand neither the Light which they profess, nor St *John*'s Gospel, is an Evil presumption, and what if I say Blasphemy, against some that dwell in Heaven. As for thy terms, *viz.* Omniformity of the Ideal world, they may be either thy own, or some borrowed Invention, which not being taught them by the holy Spirit and divine Testimony thereof in the holy Scriptures, the *Quakers* reject the more, seeing it is such an Idol, that although they sincerely confess and believe in the Light, according to *John*'s Gospel, they shall not be allowed to understand either, without bowing thereto; What art thou O man, that boasteth thy self? art thou wiser than thy Maker? whose Wisdom hath brought forth and taught his People these expressions; Canst thou by searching find out God, or the Almighty unto perfection? I tell thee nay, but God will Confound thy Wisdom, and bring to naught thy understanding, wherein it is exalted; for he hath Determined to stain the Pride of all Flesh, the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

*This is written for the clearing of Truth's Testimony from the Rubbish thou hast cast thereon, in good Will to all, and desiring thy Soul's welfare.*

*By* R. V.

THE END.